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579 The observation with which Im Thurn introduces his discussion of the social life of the Guiana tribes, "The Indian in his natural state, before he feels the influence of white man is of decidedly admirable morality" /cited in English/, is also true in its full extent for the Karaya. This natural morality, completely independent of religious beliefs, makes the existence of a primitive community such as theirs possible. It expresses itself in the [576] scrupulous observation of the commandments of external propriety (1), which does not escape even the casual visitor, but,

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1. Of culture-historical interest and typical of the feeling of propriety of these savages is the manner of their defecation. It occurs as far as possible from the village. A hole is made in the sand. The individual sits on it with outstretched legs, hiding the upper body behind a small mat. The excrement is always carefully buried.

above all, in the exemplary conduct of family life. The 593 solidarity of the family group, which even Martius, rashly 602 generalizing from his observations among demoralized tribes, denied that the Americans possessed at all, has quite truly given this people the moral support which has prevented its decline up to now, despite a century of contact with civilization and, hopefully, will hold it off for a long time to come.

The Karaya family seems, according to its form to be a "mother family." The following facts speak in favor of this:

1. The married man does not eat with his family, but with that of his married sister. Accordingly, he is considered a member of his sister's family.

2. Likewise in the division of the hunting spoils he receives his share, not in his own house, but in that of his sister.

768 3. The children of a widower are cared for by his parents-
589 in-law, while he himself re-enters the ranks of the bachelors.
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